Salt Production

†*34. DR. MURLI MANOHAR JOSHI:
SHRI RAJ MOHINDER SINGH MAJITHA:

Will the Minister of COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY be pleased to state:

(a) Whether it is a fact that the production of salt is on the decrease continuously in the last few years in the country;

(b) If so, the decrease recorded in the production of salt from the year 2005 to 2008; and

(c) The amount of hike in the price of salt in the country due to such shortage?

THE MINISTER OF COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY (SHRI KAMAL NATH): (a) There is decrease in salt production in subsequent years as compared to 2005.

(b) The details of salt production and increase/decrease in quantity during the last three years are given below:

Year	Production (in lakh) tonnes)	(-) decrease/(+) increase with reference to previous year (in lakh tonnes)
2005	199.24	
2006	180.86	(-) 18.38
2007	183.89	(+) 3.03

(c) There is an increase of about Rs. 100=Rs. 150 per tonne of salt at the production centres. The price increase at the production centres coupled with increase in other input costs like packing material, transportation cost by rail/road etc. have resulted in increase in wholesale and retail prices of edible salt. The increase is about Rs. 1/- per kg. for refined/ vacuum edible salt and Rs. 0.50 per kg. for non-refined edible salt.

The refined/vacuum edible salt is available at the retail level at a price ranging from Rs. 9-10 per kg. and non-refined variety is available at a price of Rs. 3.50—Rs. 5.00 per kg. in consumer packs.

Special package for importers affected by rupee appreciation

*35. SHRI A. VIJAYARAGHAVAN: Will the Minister of COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Ministry is considering any special package to importers who suffered losses due to the rise in the value of rupee;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) whether the Ministry will recommend such packages for NRIs who also suffered set-backs due to the unprecedented rise of rupee?

† Original notice of the question was received in Hindi.